

## **Excerpt from the 1915(b)/(c) Specialty Services Waiver**

### **Peer Specialist Services**

#### **Peer-Delivered or -Operated Support Services**

Programs and services that provide individuals with opportunities to learn and share coping skills and strategies, move into more active assistance and away from passive roles, and to build and/or enhance self-esteem and self-confidence.

#### **Peer Specialist Services**

Peer specialist services provide individuals with opportunities to support, mentor and assist beneficiaries to achieve community inclusion, participation, independence, recovery, resiliency and/or productivity. Peers are individuals who have a unique background and skill level from their experience in utilizing services and supports to achieve their personal goals of community membership, independence and productivity. Peers have a special ability to gain trust and respect of other beneficiaries based on shared experience and perspectives with disabilities, and with planning and negotiating human services systems.

- Vocational assistance provides support for beneficiaries seeking education and/or training opportunities, finding a job, achieving successful employment activities, and developing self-employment opportunities (reported as skill-building or supported employment).
- Housing assistance provides support locating and acquiring appropriate housing for achieving independent living; finding and choosing roommates; utilizing short-term, interim, or one-time-only financial assistance in order to transition from restrictive settings into independent integrated living arrangements; making applications for Section 8 Housing vouchers; managing costs of room and board utilizing an individual budget; purchasing a home; etc. (reported as supports coordination\*).
- Services and supports planning and utilization assistance provides assistance and partnership in:
  - ⇒ The person-centered planning process (reported as either treatment planning or supports coordination\*);
  - ⇒ Developing and applying arrangements that support self-determination;
  - ⇒ Directly selecting, employing or directing support staff;
  - ⇒ Sharing stories of recovery and/or advocacy involvement and initiative for the purpose of assisting recovery and self-advocacy;
  - ⇒ Accessing entitlements;
  - ⇒ Developing wellness plans;
  - ⇒ Developing advance directives;
  - ⇒ Learning about and pursuing alternatives to guardianship;
  - ⇒ Providing supportive services during crises;
  - ⇒ Developing, implementing and providing ongoing guidance for advocacy and support groups.

Activities provided by peers are completed in partnership with beneficiaries for the specific purpose of achieving increased beneficiary community inclusion and participation, independence and productivity.

Individuals providing Peer Support Services must be able to demonstrate their experience in relationship to the types of guidance, support and mentoring activities they will provide. Individuals providing these services should be those generally recognized and accepted to be peers. Beneficiaries utilizing Peer Support Services must freely choose the individual who is providing Peer Support Services. Individuals who are functioning as Peer Support Specialists serving beneficiaries with mental illness must meet MDCH specialized training and certification requirements.

\* Peer case managers, supports coordinators or supports specialists must be trained and supervised by a PIHP or CMHSP case manager or supports coordinator who meets the qualifications of case manager or supports coordinator. Peer counselors must be trained and supervised by a qualified mental health therapist.